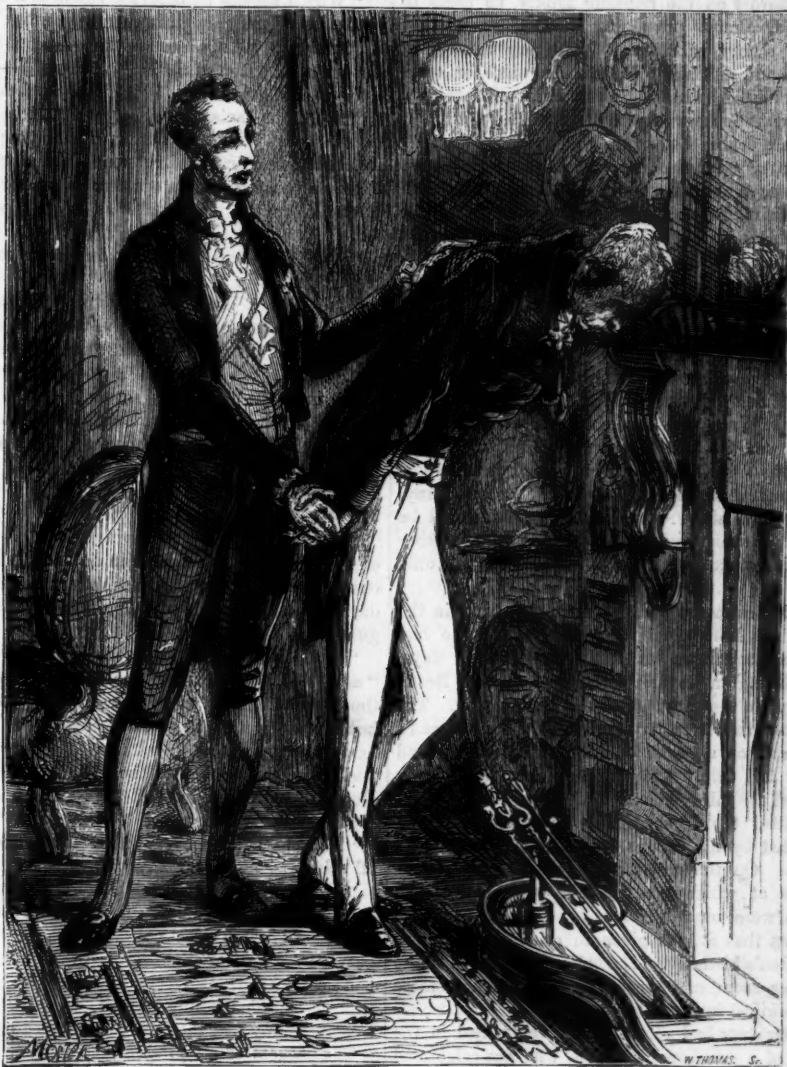


THE QUIVER

— Saturday, Sept. 23, 1865. —



"The old man leant his head on the mantel-piece, and sobbed convulsively."

THE TEACHER OF LANGUAGES.

IN a dingy attic, in a small offshoot of Dean Street, Soho—that region of seedy gentility and habitat of foreign immigrants—dwelt Emile de Beaucourt, teacher of languages. M. de

Beaucourt, properly, M. le Vicomte de Beaucourt, was a broken old gentleman of sixty, or thereabouts. He was descended from one of the noblest houses in France, and could carry his

lineage back to the days of Charlemagne. Compelled to quit France, in consequence of the publication of a political pamphlet, which bore rather hardly on the reigning family, he came to England, almost penniless, and endeavoured to gain a scanty subsistence by giving lessons in French and Italian. In this he was, for some years, assisted by his wife; but the irresistible hand of consumption was upon the poor lady, and for two years before the opening of our story she had been utterly helpless, for a partial paralysis of the lower limbs, the result of an accidental fall down-stairs, had contributed its effect to render the unfortunate lady absolutely powerless to assist herself.

M. de Beaucourt had a hard time of it. His earnings were very small, for a certain independence of manner, which characterised the old gentleman in his intercourse with his patrons, had, at various times, given offence to such of them as, from their own dubious position, could not afford to make a concession to any one in their employ. The unfortunate condition of his poor wife, required that she should be sustained by luxuries which it was absolutely out of his power to obtain. Every penny, however, of his wretched income that could be spared for the purpose, was devoted to procuring such little luxuries as those few pennies would buy.

M. de Beaucourt had one staunch patron in the person of Lord Ovington, with whom he had become acquainted at Paris in happier days. Lord Ovington invariably treated M. de Beaucourt with the most gentlemanly courtesy. The vicomte was frequently a guest at the nobleman's table, and on all such occasions he was addressed by his full title. The poor gentleman was deeply grateful for this recognition of his social position: it recalled the days when he was honoured and respected by all classes from Napoleon I. downwards. On the occasion of one of these dinner parties at which the vicomte was present, the guests were more hilarious than usual, owing to the fact that it was given in celebration of Lord Ovington's birthday. The ladies had retired to the drawing-room, and the conversation became more unrestrained in its character.

A burglary had recently been committed in the house of a gentleman present, who was celebrated for the splendour of his dinner parties, and the greater part of his family plate had been removed. The unfortunate victim was detailing an account of the remarkably ingenious manner in which the entrance to his house had been effected, and he concluded his description by saying, in a jocular tone, that as he had no plate left, he could give no more dinner parties, so that, after all, he was not so great a loser as people might at first be disposed to imagine.

"Well," said Lord Ovington, "I shall soon be in the same condition myself."

"How so?" asked one of the company.

"Why, I am the unfortunate victim of a series of robberies, trivial enough in themselves, but which, if persisted in, will reduce my plate-chest to the unfortunate condition of that of our friend B——'s."

"Indeed," said B——. "Tell us all about it."

"Well, the facts are simply as follows: After every dinner party, my butler, Edward, reports to me that a silver fork or silver spoon is missing. This has been going on for upwards of six months, and he can form no conjecture as to the probable felon."

"Well, but have you taken any steps to investigate the matter?"

"None of a decisive character. Edward has watched the servants narrowly, but he has been unable to fix suspicion upon any one of them."

"Well, look here," said a jocular captain of dragoons, "it's either the servants or the guests. Trot out all the men who've been waiting at dinner, and make them empty their pockets in our presence—every one of 'em!"

"Hear, hear!" from the other guests. "Trot 'em all out!"

"No, no," said Lord Ovington. "There are eight men in the house, and in all probability only one of them is guilty. It would be most unjust to degrade the other seven before the eyes of my guests."

"Well, look here," said the eccentric soldier, "as I said before, it's either the servants or it's the guests. You won't parade your servants, but I vote we guests parade ourselves. I challenge every man at this table to empty all his pockets before the eyes of the rest of the company. Not a man present has left the room since dinner began. That's a fair test."

"Done! Empty everybody!" resounded from all sides.

"Nonsense, Gordon," said Lord Ovington.

"No, no! We'll do it. Empty everybody!"

Lord Ovington was powerless to prevent his guests from putting themselves to the test. They had nearly all drunk freely, and were, for the most part, hot-headed young fellows, who would have attempted any feat they were challenged to.

The pockets of all present had been turned inside out, with the exception of the vicomte's. He resolutely refused to comply with the conditions imposed by Captain Gordon, and appealed to Lord Ovington to protect him from insult.

A dead silence ensued. It was impossible not to suspect the poor old teacher of languages, who was known to be far inferior in worldly position to the remainder of the guests, although none supposed him to be as poverty-stricken as he really was.

At length Gordon spoke—

"M. le Vicomte," said he, "I don't quite see why you don't do as all of us have done. Here are four—five-and-twenty of us who've done it; why don't you? It looks odd—very odd indeed."

Lord Ovington was perplexed. It was clearly his duty to protect his guest from annoyance, but it was equally incumbent upon him to vindicate the old gentleman's character.

"Vicomte, don't suppose for one moment that I draw an uncharitable conclusion from your refusal. Gordon had no right to impose the test; but, at the same time, as all my other friends have accepted it willingly, I am afraid that if you don't follow suit you will compromise yourself, not with me, but with them. Perhaps, on that account, it would be better if you pocketed the affront."

"Well, well," said Lord Ovington, when he saw that the vicomte remained speechless; "do as you like, my dear fellow; it will make no difference whatever to me."

"Milord, I have no explanation to offer to these gentlemen. To you, however, an explanation is due, and if your lordship will kindly accompany me into the next room, I will explain."

"By all means, vicomte, if you think it necessary. Follow me;" and the teacher rose, and followed Lord Ovington into an adjoining room.

"Milord," said the old gentleman, "I could not empty my pockets before your guests, because I could not tell them, who know me only as the Vicomte de Beaucourt, how low I had fallen. Milord, you know that I have a wife, but you do not know that she is dying of consumption, and that she is paralysed. You do not know that I have two little children who are half-clothed and starving. You do not know that every penny of the salary you have given me is expended on their poor mother, who would die if she were not sustained by luxuries which are suf-

ficient of themselves to swallow my little income. The miserable condition of my poor wife and children is brought forcibly before me as I sit at your splendid table. To-day as I sat at your dinner, the recollection of my sick wife and starving children thrust itself upon me, and I could not refrain from secreting in my pocket-handkerchief the breast of a chicken, which was at that moment on the plate before me. Now, milord, you know the full extent of my destitution."

And the old man leant his head on the mantelpiece, and sobbed convulsively.

"Vicomte, my poor old friend," said Lord Ovington, "you must take me immediately to Madame la Vicomtesse. Nothing that money can procure shall be wanting to you."

Lord Ovington returned to the dining-room, and informed his guests that M. le Vicomte had fully and most satisfactorily explained his reason for not accepting Captain Gordon's test. He then begged them to excuse him for a short time.

The rest of the story is soon told. Lord Ovington and the vicomte drove to the house in Soho. Lord Ovington was astonished and pained to witness the state of destitution to which the vicomte had been reduced. He undertook to procure employment for the poor old gentleman, and promised that his own physician should attend the sick lady gratuitously.

There was happiness that night in the lonely lodging of the exiles, and by the side of his sick wife's couch the poor Frenchman poured forth, amid sobs, his thanks to the Father of all mercies, to whom he had so often prayed for help, and who had now, in His own good time, out of a trivial annoyance, wrought the relief of the distressed.

Owing to Lord Ovington's recommendation, more work poured in upon the old linguist. Madame la Vicomtesse improved rapidly in health, and comparative affluence once more blessed the home of the poor old teacher of languages.

SONG OF THE PINK.*

I.



WHEN evening skies are fretted with gold,
Down which the sun may stately
sink;

And dew, like mist, broods over the wold,
To fancy's chain thou addest a link—

Pink, chink,

Tink, dink,

Like a silver chain's soft musical clink.

II.

When summer midges play on the pond,
And cattle linger round by the brink,
Knee-deep in sedge, and rushes, and frond,
To chew the cud, or lazily drink—

Pink, chink,

Tink, dink,

With a merry, lilting, chirruping jink.

III.

When Dian spreads her silvery dawn,
At which the owl beginneth his blink,
And like elf-spears out shineth the awn;
Within thy nest thou'lt shivering shrink—

Chink, dink,

Whink, think,

So melteth away the song of the Pink.

* Chaffinch.

BOXALIA.

WHAT DOES THE EARTH TEACH?

BY THE REV. J. C. RYLE, B.A.

"Speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee."—
Job xii. 8.



OD has provided two great books for man's instruction—the book of revelation and the book of creation. The one is that volume whose name is familiar to us all—the Bible; the other is that wonderfully framed universe, whose silent pages are ever lying open to an observant eye.

The lessons of the book of revelation are known to a comparatively small portion of mankind. There are many millions of men and women who never heard of a Bible, and are utterly ignorant of its saving truths.

The lessons of the book of creation are within reach of every human being. The most unlearned savage has a great teacher close at hand, though he knows it not.

To both of these great books one common remark applies. A man may live in the full light of them, and yet be no wiser for them. The book of Scripture may be possessed, and yet confer no benefit on the possessor. To understand the Bible rightly, we need the teaching of the Holy Ghost. The book of creation may be open on every side of us, and yet we may see nothing of God in it. It is pre-eminently a volume which is instructive to none but an enlightened eye. "But he that is spiritual discerneth all things" (1 Cor. ii. 15). Once let a man's mind be guided by the Spirit of God, and he will see in both volumes things that he never dreamed of before. The Bible will make him wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Creation, read with a spiritual eye, will confirm the lessons of the Bible. The words of God's mouth, and the works of God's hand, will be found to throw mutual light on one another.

The season of the year to which we have come has drawn me into this train of thought. Harvest with all its interesting accompaniments, is upon us. Thousands of strong arms are clearing their way, over fields of wheat, and barley, and oats, from one end of the land to the other. Thousands of eyes are reading every square yard of our English corn-fields. I think it good, at a season like this, to remind people of the many lessons which the earth is continually teaching. I should like to sound in the ears of every farmer, and labourer, and gleaner in the land the striking words of Job—"Speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee."

But what are the special lessons which the earth teaches? They are many and various—far more than most people suppose—more even, I believe, than many true Christians ever consider. I am one of those who hold firmly that there is a close

harmony between nature and revelation. Let me give a few examples of what I mean:—

1. I believe, for one thing, that the earth teaches *the wisdom and power of God*.

This is a point which requires very little proof. None but an atheist, I think, would attempt to deny it. That the globe in which we live and move must have had a beginning; that matchless wisdom and design appear in every part of the framework of creation; that the minutest plants and animals, when viewed under a microscope, proclaim loudly "the hand that made us is Divine"—all these are great first principles, which few will attempt to dispute. The denial of them involves far greater difficulties than the acceptance. No wonder that St. Paul declares: "The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Rom. i. 20).

2. I believe, for another thing, that the earth teaches *the doctrine of the fall of man*.

How, I should like to know, can we account for the many enemies which often attack the best products of the earth, and prevent them coming to perfection? The weeds which impede the growth of corn, and require to be rooted up; the insects and vermin which prey on it—the slug, the caterpillar, the wireworm, and all their companions; the diseases to which the plant is liable, such as mildew, rust, smut, and many others; from whence do these things come? They exist, as every farmer could tell us he finds to his cost. They interfere with the full development of many a harvest, and cause many a field to disappoint its owner of a full crop. But how can they be accounted for? I am bold to say that only one answer can be given to this question. That answer must be sought in the 3rd chapter of Genesis, in the old familiar story of sin coming into the world. I assert confidently that nothing but the records of that chapter can explain the state of things which we see continually under our eyes. We cannot for a moment suppose that God created anything imperfect. Everything that God made was, like him who made it, "perfect and very good" at the beginning. But something has evidently come in since the day of creation, which has defiled and marred God's handiwork. That something is sin! The earth, with all its beauty and fertility, is an earth which is still under the primeval curse—"Cursed is the ground for thy sake. . . Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee" (Gen. iii. 17, 18). I look for better days to come on the earth. I believe that the words of the Psalmist shall be fulfilled when

Christ returns the second time, and the curse is taken away. "Then shall the earth yield her increase," &c. (Ps. lxxvii. 6). But in the meantime I believe firmly that the earth shows everywhere the footprints of sin.

The infidel and deist are fond of pointing to the works of nature, and bidding us look up through nature to nature's God. But let them explain, if they can, the anomalies and imperfections which no student of nature can fail to observe on the earth. I tell them boldly that they never can be explained without the Bible. The Bible alone can solve the problem. The Bible alone can make things plain. Without the Bible there are a thousand things in nature which would perplex and puzzle us. But when I read what happened in the garden of Eden I see a solution of all my difficulties. I find that nature confirms revelation.

3. I believe, for another thing, that the earth teaches *the great truth that life comes out of death.*

No man, I imagine, can study what goes on yearly on the face of the soil without seeing that the death of one thing is the life of another. The annual death and decay of millions of leaves and plants is a part of the process by which vegetation is continually maintained. Leaf after leaf perishes, and contributes to the fertility and productiveness of coming years. Plant after plant is turned into rich mould, and helps forward the growth of another season. Even the seed corn which is sown exemplifies the same great principle. Grain after grain must die before there can appear "the blade, the ear, and the full corn in the ear." The golden harvest which is reaped every autumn could never exist unless this great principle was annually worked out—that life springs out of death.

Now what is all this but a confirmation of one of the mightiest truths of Scripture? What have we here but light thrown on the great foundation of Christianity—Christ's death the life of the world? Hear what our Lord himself says: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John xii. 24.) The sacrificial death of Christ as our substitute on the cross is the foundation stone of the whole Gospel. From his cross and grave spring all the lessons of a Christian. Take away his atoning death, and you take away everything worth contending for in revealed religion. His death is our title to life; his sufferings the ground of our claims to glory; his crucifixion our warrant for expecting a crown. What intelligent Bible reader does not know that these are among the first principles of our faith? Is it nothing, then, that this great truth is pictured out every year on the face of the earth around us? To my mind, it is an unspeakable comfort. It helps, and strengthens, and confirms my faith.

4. I believe, for another thing, that the earth

teaches the deep truth that *God acts as a sovereign in giving life where he wills.*

The profusion of vegetable life which the earth puts forth every year is so great as to baffle all calculation. Millions and millions of living seeds are called into existence which might, for anything we can see, become the productive parents of future vegetation. Yet millions and millions are never used for this purpose. Some are picked up by birds and insects, and used as food. Some fall into the ground and rot, and pass away. Even in the most carefully prepared corn-field, the proportion of seed corn that springs up and yields a harvest is far smaller than most people would suppose.

Now, why is all this? We cannot tell. The wisest course is to confess our ignorance. The facts are before us, and we cannot deny them. But how to explain the enormous annual waste of life which is incessantly going on is a problem that baffles man's understanding.

But does not this state of things assist us in considering that deep and mysterious truth, the sovereignty of God in saving sinners? We know that there are nations on the earth at this moment to whom God has never been pleased to send the light of the Gospel. We know that there are thousands in our own land who, living in the full sunshine of religious privileges, remain dead in sin, and utterly careless about their souls. Graceless and godless they live, and graceless and godless they seem to die.

Now, if we attempt to explain this condition of things, we are brought to a standstill at once. It is a high thing, and we cannot understand it. It is a deep thing, and we have no line to fathom it. We can only fall back on our own ignorance, and rest satisfied that what we know not now we shall know hereafter. They that are lost at last will be found lost through their own sins and folly. The Judge of all the earth will certainly do right.

Yet surely the face of the earth around us may help us in considering the subject. The great fact that meets our eyes on every side, that not every living seed is allowed to live and grow up into a plant, is a fact that should be pondered well, and kept continually upon our minds. Whatever men may please to say about the doctrine of election in theology, they cannot deny its existence in vegetation.

5. I believe, for another thing, that the earth teaches us *the importance of a diligent use of means.*

The things that grow upon the earth contain in themselves a boundless capability of improvement. The gardener and the farmer know this perfectly well. It is one of the first principles of their business. They cannot give life. They cannot command success. "The earth bringeth forth fruit of itself." But when life has once been given, it seems to admit of indefinite strengthening and in-

crease. By breaking up the earth and manuring it, by weeding and watering, by cleansing and protecting, by draining and irrigating, the results that may be produced are without end.

There is a spiritual lesson here, which is clear, plain, and unmistakable. Life is a thing that no man can give to his own soul, nor to the soul of another. But when life has once been imparted by the Spirit of God, there is no end to the results that may be produced by spiritual diligence and by pains in the use of means.

He knows but little who fancies that once converted he may sit still, and dream lazily along his journey to heaven. Let him know that his soul's prosperity is most intimately bound up with his soul's carefulness and labour. Let him resist the spirit of laziness, and work hard in the ways that God has appointed. Let him take heed to his Bible reading and his praying, to his sermon-hearing and use of the Lord's Supper. Let him watch daily over his temper and his tongue, his company and his employment of time. Let him strive and agonise after a complete victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil. Let him remember that if it is worth while to do anything for his soul, it is worth while to do it well.

Well would it be for the Church if these simple lessons were more constantly kept in mind. Happy is that Christian who cultivates his soul as if it were a farm or a garden, and learns the wisdom of spiritual diligence from man's treatment of the land.

6. I believe, lastly, that the earth teaches *that great truth, the resurrection of the body.*

Nothing, perhaps, is more remarkable than the wide difference between the appearance of earth at the beginning of winter and at the beginning of

spring. Thousands of herbaceous flowers in winter are dead down to the very ground. Not a vestige of life remains about them. The great majority of trees are naked and bare. The little child is ready to think they are dead, and will never put forth leaves again. And yet both flowers and trees are alive, and in due time will be clothed again with bloom and beauty. As soon as the warm air of spring begins to be felt a resurrection takes place. To use the beautiful words of the Canticles—"The winter is past; the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth" (Cant. ii. 11, 12).

Cold must that mind be, and dull that heart, which does not see, in this great annual change, a lively type of the resurrection of man's body. He who formed the world foresaw the weakness of man's faith. He foreknew our slowness to believe spiritual things. He has taken care to provide us with an annual remembrancer of what he intends to do for our bodies at the last day. As plants and trees put forth life in spring, so in due time "our bodies shall rise again." Well may we say, when we look at the difference of the earth in winter and in summer, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should raise the dead?" Well may we say, when sneering scoffers ask the question, "How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?" "Who art thou that talkest of difficulties? Speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee." "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. . . . So also is the resurrection of the dead" (1 Cor. xv. 36-42).

"USE LEGS AND HAVE LEGS."

BY REV. H. STOWELL BROWN.



THIS is a very sensible old proverb. It is similar in its import to those common sayings—"Practice makes perfect," "The used key is always bright," "Drawn wells are seldom dry." The principle expressed by all these maxims is this, that the healthy exercise of our faculties increases their power. This is true; and it is equally true that if we do not exercise our faculties their power will decline; for, as "to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance," so "from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath."

"Use legs and have legs." See how true this is in regard to the muscular system. Men differ very

much in strength and activity. One can lift three hundredweight with ease, another can scarcely move one hundredweight; one can run a mile in a few minutes, or walk forty miles in a day without fatigue, another is dead beat with a run of one hundred yards, and knocked up with a walk of five miles. And, very often, the older man is stronger and more active than the younger, the smaller than the larger, the heavier man than the lighter. Whence this difference in strength and activity, a difference that often amounts to 300 per cent.? Of course, in many cases, and to a great extent, the difference is to be accounted for by the fact that one man is born with a much better constitution than that which falls to the lot of another; but it is really astonishing to observe in how many instances, and to

how great an extent, the difference under consideration is explained by the principle of using legs and having legs. Exercise often reverses the original relationships of two men in the matter of muscular power. He who was originally the weaker becomes the stronger. The disadvantage of a feeble constitution is overcome by exercise, and the advantage of a strong constitution is lost by the neglect of exercise. All persons do not come into the world with the same physical capacities; but all persons do not, through life, continue in the same ratio of inequality; and it is the use, or non-use, of our powers, that effects such alterations in their ratios.

We often speak, with profound pity, of persons who have lost the use of their limbs; and by such persons we mean poor creatures who have been paralysed, so that they can neither run, walk, nor stand. But such unfortunate beings are not the only people who have not the use of their limbs. The use of our limbs, the full, perfect use of our limbs, is what very few of us possess. The probability is that most of us have not more than about one-half the use of our limbs. Those of our readers who are not practised gymnasts, but who are rather astonished and annoyed to be told that they have not the use of their limbs, will do well to visit a gymnasium, and witness the feats that are performed there. There, in the running, the leaping, the jumping, the wrestling, the fencing, the climbing, the lifting of great weights, and throwing of heavy bodies, our non-athletic friends will see what the full use of our limbs really is; and the sight, without any attempt to perform such wonders, will convince them that, although, happily, not paralysed, it is absurd for them to say that they have more than one-half the use of their limbs—if, indeed, so much.

Most persons think that they are what God made them, and they will be startled and shocked on being told that this notion is rather doubtful. But it is more than doubtful, it is decidedly erroneous; we are not what God made us, but what we have made ourselves, through the use, or the non-use, of the faculties which God bestowed upon us. It is surely very desirable that we should be, even physically, all that our Creator has rendered us capable of being; therefore, let us, by careful culture, make the best use of what power remains to us, and, as far as possible, recover what we have lost; and many of us have probably lost more than we can recover now. Upon young people especially let us urge the duty of using legs as the only means of really having legs.

The intellectual differences between men are as great as the physical—if not, indeed, much greater. But here, again, the differences are not all to be referred, either as to their quality or their quantity, to the mental powers with which we came into the world; for as we may say, "Use legs and have

legs," so we may say, "Use mind and have mind." The Spaniards say, that "to lather an ass's head is only wasting soap." Very true; there are some people whom no amount of care or culture can bring up even to mediocrity—men who, to quote another old proverb, "Were born under a three-halfpenny planet, and will never be worth twopence." Still, the patient, plodding tortoise often overtakes the sleeping hare, and triumphantly wins the race. The poet, the painter, the musician, the orator, are born, not made; but it is a great mistake to suppose that either poet, painter, musician, or orator, rises to eminence without effort. Perhaps it is more correct to say that such men are both born and made. There must be the gift, to begin with; there must also be much painstaking use of the gift. Probably the majority of our greatest men owe their greatness quite as much to the diligent employment as to the original measure of their talents. If mind be used it will improve; and if it be not used it will deteriorate. It is with great difficulty that a middle-aged person educates himself. Possibly, it may never be too late to learn, but it may be too late to learn with anything like facility; a mind not used for many years gets into a hide-bound condition, from which a perfect recovery seems impossible. And even if the intellectual power be not impaired through disuse, the consciousness of being so far behind is so discouraging as to prevent all active effort at a late period of life. "Use mind and have mind;" but use it at once, for mind is a thing that seems to evaporate if not put to immediate use.

The same principle applies to our moral conduct. "Resist the devil and he will flee from you;" and, should he return, the fact that you have resisted him before will make you all the more able to resist him again. Whether the particular devil that assails you be intemperance, or lust, or lying, or anger, or indolence—resist, resist at first, and you will have less and less difficulty in all subsequent struggles with the adversary. It is a poor excuse to say, when we have done wrong, that we are so weak as to be unable to withstand temptation. Let us seriously consider how it comes to pass that we are so weak. Have we ever manfully endeavoured to be strong? Have we ever exercised ourself unto godliness? It is no wonder that some of us are morally so weak. If we had exercised our bodies and our minds as little as we have exercised our consciences, we should be as weak as babies and as unwise as idiots. Come, are we not responsible for this moral weakness? Is it not, to a very great extent, the result of that shameful neglect which has been the lot of our moral nature? Have we not thus wronged our own souls? But let no man be too sure that "it is never too late to mend." There comes a time when it is too late to mend a coat, a hat, a pair of shoes; there comes a time when it is

too late to mend a neglected and abused body and mind. Have we not seen many a man who, though still young, is, through dissipation, done for? His eye has lost its keenness of vision, his hand its steadiness and skill, his brain has almost ceased to be the organ of thought, the understanding is muddled, the memory is impaired; the case altogether is hopeless—it is too late to mend. Physically and mentally, therefore, a man may very easily and very rapidly get himself into an altogether irretrievable condition. And is there not the same awful possibility with regard to our moral nature? May it not come to pass that it shall be too late to mend this? May not a man go on in evil until all faculty of doing good is gone; until a paralysis

from which there is no recovery (excepting through some miracle, which it is presumptuous and vain to look for) has seized the shrivelled, shrunken powers of conscience and of will, that might once have been used to such good purpose? Use legs and have legs; use brains and have brains; use your conscience and have a conscience; use your will and have a will; use all the powers of body and of soul which God has given you; and use them in the prosecution of those ends for which they have been given; and so every power will improve, for “to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance;” but remember, “from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.”

OVER THE HILLS.



VER the hills, and far away;
'Neath the bayonets' gleam and the
banners' play,
With prancing steed and lances gay,
Over the hills and far away.

Over the hills the livelong day,
And the mighty host tread down the grass,
And the birds are hushed as the trumpets pass,
And the lovely hills send back again
The clang and the hum of the armed men.

Beyond the hills and far away,
Where no bayonets gleam or trumpets bray,
They silent sleep thro' the livelong day,
Each stilly laid in eternal rest;
And the grass waves free o'er the steel'd breast,

And the birds sing fearless in their nest,
Beyond the hills and far away.

Far from the hills and far away,
The women weep as the children play;
They weep as the children kneel to pray,
“That father may come to his own to-day.”
And the sun is bright on the smiling green,
But the father's face is still unseen;
And sings from morn till eve the bird,
But the father's voice is still unheard;
And at night the children are laid to sleep,
But the women they only can weep and weep;
And they watch thro' the lonely night, and say,
“Will they never come back, by night or day,
From over the hills and far away?”

W.

STRAY NOTES UPON CURIOUS BIBLE WORDS.



AN accurate investigation of the text of Holy Scripture is a mode of criticism which has, in this country, been comparatively, if not wholly, neglected, until within a very recent period. I can scarcely profess to bring before my readers much that is very new to scholars in the verbal criticism of our authorised version of the Bible. There are, however, some points on which I venture to differ from those who rightly occupy the foremost place as the pioneers of modern criticism; and a few points also, in which I shall attempt to direct attention to some curious words or sentences, which have generally escaped critical observation. If in these few notes which I shall submit on some of the curious words in our Bible, I shall excite the attention of even a few to

a deeper study, and therefore, as I believe, a deeper appreciation of that blessed volume, which is the noblest specimen of Saxon literature, as well as the gift of our Lord and Master, I feel that these few stray thoughts shall not have been committed to writing in vain.

I shall first notice a few words which have altered their meaning since our translation was made, and which are generally misunderstood, and the force of the passages in which they occur entirely lost.

I shall endeavour to select those words which are least likely to attract the attention of the ordinary reader, and, beginning with a very small one, I take the word

BY.—This word “by” occurs in a very remarkable passage in 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4, which runs thus: “But with me it is a very small thing



"The women weep as the children play."—p. 8.

that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified," &c. Now, I am quite aware that the general interpretation put upon that text is, that the apostle declares his own ignorance, so far as his own ability is concerned—"I know nothing *by* myself"—that is, I have no knowledge of things spiritual of my own ability; my knowledge of such is not *of* myself—it is given me from above.

This is perfectly true, but it is not the truth which the apostle is here teaching. The whole sense of the passage turns upon the meaning of the word "by." Archbishop Trench—one of the most accomplished English scholars alive—remarks that the apostle would here say: "I know nothing of myself—in other words, *against* myself. I have, so far as I can see into my own heart and life, a conscience void of offence." The archbishop then proceeds to remark, that though the use of the word "by," as signifying "against," is not very common, yet it is occasionally to be met with: and quotes one instance of this use of the word in an old writer. (See the examination of Elizabeth Young by Martin Hussie, as recorded in Foxe's "Book of Martyrs.") The Inquisitor says: "Thou hast spoken evil words *by* the queen;" and she answers, "No man living upon earth can prove any such thing *by* me." In both the sentences Archbishop Trench considers the word "by" to signify "against," as he interprets it in 1 Cor. iv. 4.

In this I venture to differ from the distinguished critic. There is no doubt that the word "by" has in this sentence a rather peculiar meaning; but I think the archbishop has wandered farther from the simple etymological meaning of "by" than was necessary. Dr. Trench takes "by" to be synonymous with "against." I do not know whether he has other passages of old authors in his mind where "by" signifies "against;" but, assuredly, this isolated one from Foxe is far from establishing the point. I believe "by" is used in 1 Cor. iv. 4, in a sense in which it is sometimes used now, and signifies, not "against," but, "in connection with." "I know nothing *by* myself"—i.e., "in connection with myself," or "concerning myself;" and this the apostle very naturally gives as a reason for not judging himself. The word "by" is even still used to signify "in connection with." Thus we speak of a house being "hard *by* the market-place;" of two persons standing "side *by* side"—that is, the side of one "in connection with" the side of the other. This interpretation of the word "by" would equally well, if not better, explain the word in the passage which Trench quotes from Foxe, and which I have given above. Dean Alford's view of the meaning of this word "by" in 1 Cor. iv. 4, seems to coincide with that

of Archbishop Trench. He gives three illustrations—two from the Bible, and one from the Book of Common Prayer—of the use of "by" as equivalent to "against." To all of them, however, I venture to think my interpretation will equally apply. For instance, the passage in Ps. xv. 4 (P.B.V.), "He that setteth not *by* himself, but is lowly in his own eyes," &c., surely cannot mean, "He that is not puffed up *against* himself;" but must mean "He that is not puffed up 'concerning,' or 'in connection with,' himself," &c. Thus we have three interpretations of this verse, all resting upon the meaning of "by."

1. The popular interpretation making it signify "of," or "arising from." "I have no knowledge, of my own power or will." Whatever interpretation is right, this is beyond all question wrong, and renders the whole passage absurd. It is the result of a cursory reading of the passage, and attaching a vague, loose meaning to "by," making it signify "the instrument by which," or "the source from which."

2. "By" is supposed to signify "against." This view has the splendid reputations of Trench and Alford to sustain it, and also has the recommendation of not making nonsense of the passage; but it seems to me that it is giving the word a meaning here which it cannot be proved to have in any other passage of English composition, as far as I can discover, and assuredly it has no etymological foundation.

3. The word "by," as I conceive, signifies "in connection with," or as it is so commonly said, "hard by." This interpretation seems to have some advantage, if I may venture to say so, over the former explanation, inasmuch as it is etymologically sound, and gives to the word the meaning in which it, even still, is sometimes used. I may, perhaps, add that I never could see the force of the passage if the interpretation of Dr. Trench be adopted. The apostle states that he does not judge his own self, and gives as a reason, "for I know nothing *by* myself," i.e., "against myself;" how or why that is a reason for not judging himself I cannot discover. But it does seem reasonable enough for the apostle to say, "I judge not my own self, for I know nothing in connection with myself." My ignorance of my own conduct, its motives and effects, prevents my being a fair judge; and if I judge not mine own self, because even I myself am ignorant of my own conduct, must it not indeed be "a small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment," seeing that any one else must know less of me than I do of myself. "But He that judgeth me is the Lord." He knows, and he alone knows properly, all things concerning me (not against me, as Trench and Alford);—he alone, therefore, is able fairly to judge me.

DEPARTMENT FOR THE YOUNG.

HOW FANCHETTE ENVIED A FINE LADY.

BY SARA WOOD.

IF we are to tell a story about a little French girl, it will be necessary to describe to our readers something of the manner of living in Paris and other large cities of France, where, instead of people having houses to themselves, small or large, according to their poverty or wealth, it is customary for many families to occupy one large house—living, however, quite distinct and apart from each other, on different “flats,” or storeys, which are reached by one large public staircase. Thus, for instance, it is often the case that the first floor of a large house, consisting of lofty and handsomely furnished rooms, will be occupied by a wealthy family, such as in London would have a house to themselves in one of our best streets. On the second floor will be, perhaps, a much less wealthy family; and the third storey will be divided among two or three families in quite humble circumstances; while the attics or garrets will be rented by mechanics, artisans—poor working people who, in these very elevated abodes, carry on their lowly callings away from the bustle and noise of the streets, and at least enjoy quiet and fresh air. In this manner it came about that little Fanchette Leroux and her mother occupied two rooms on the third floor of a handsome house in one of the principal streets of Paris, although they were anything but rich.

Madame Leroux was the widow of a soldier, who had died of fever in Algeria, and though she received a small pension from the Government, it was not enough for her support, so that she was obliged to work as a *brodeuse*, or embroiderer, and had a sort of reputation for her skill and taste in the execution of a certain kind of embroidery which, at the time of which we are about to tell, happened to be much in fashion among the ladies of Paris. It thus arose that, in order to go on with her work uninterruptedly, and to keep her hands unsoiled for her dainty work, she had taken her only little daughter away from school at the early age of twelve years old, and given to her the charge of her little household; so that Fanchette had become, as it were, her housekeeper, housemaid, and cook, all in one; and while she bent from morning till night over her embroidery frame, covering delicate muslin with leaves and flowers, she had scarcely time to look up from her work to give Fanchette instructions about household matters. In a little while, in fact, Fanchette took everything upon herself; and the more she had to plan, arrange, and provide, without help or advice from her mother, the better she liked it.

We have said that Madame Leroux and Fanchette occupied two rooms of a storey of the great house; but we must not omit to mention that they had also the use of a tiny little kitchen, where, Fanchette soon learned to do all the cooking that her mother required.

Of course, the many journeys which Fanchette made up and down the great staircase brought her acquainted with some of the other inhabitants of the house, so far as to know their names and avocations. She was, however, a longer time before she found out any particulars about the family which lived on the first floor of the house, who were new comers, and who, not only by the handsome style of their apartments, but also by many other indications, she knew must be very wealthy people.

“I have found out at last,” said she, one day to her mother, “the name of the people on the first storey. They are called De la Tour, for I heard some one ask at their door this morning if Madame de la Tour were at home. And there is a Mademoiselle de la Tour, too, a young lady, a little older than I am, who wears such splendid silk dresses. I saw her as I passed on the stairs one day, as the door of their apartments was open. She was standing at a table in such a lovely violet coloured silk dress, and there was a great mirror, in a gold frame, which reflected her figure from head to foot, so that I seemed to see her twice over; and all around her were such beautiful objects—china vases, and pictures, and stands of flowers. Oh, mamma!” said Fanchette, sighing, “what a charming thing it must be to be rich! If I were as rich as Mademoiselle de la Tour, I should be as happy as the day is long, I am sure.

“I heard the *femme de chambre* tell the portress, this morning, that mademoiselle was going to a concert this evening. She said mademoiselle was so very fond of music: and so am I, and yet I never go to concerts. Dear, me! what it is to be rich!”

Fanchette, however, had her pleasures, though she did not reckon them up, and never went to concerts.

“Do you know, mamma,” said Fanchette, one day, “that I don’t like that Mademoiselle Pauline, who lives on the first floor? I am sure she is proud, and disagreeable, and full of airs, just because she happens to be rich. This morning, as I was coming up the stairs with my pot of jonquils, she was standing at her door ready dressed for going out, and as I passed I held up my jonquils for her to see, and just smiled a little and nodded to her, because I thought she must admire them very much; and would you.

believe it, mamma, she half closed her eyes in such a proud and disdainful way, and turned from me as if she did not care to see my dear, lovely, beautiful jonquils?" And Fanchette stood in the middle of the room, and imitated the half-shut eyes and repelling air of Mademoiselle Pauline de la Tour. "Really, mamma, I should not wonder if she only cares for what is expensive and costs a great deal of money."

From a few words that she heard pass between one of the servants of Madame de la Tour and the portress next day, Fanchette discovered that Mademoiselle Pauline was going to a very grand concert that evening, and that the carriage was ordered at a certain hour to take her there.

"Ah, mamma, only think of that! Mademoiselle is going to a grand concert to-night—because she is so fond of music, I suppose. Dear, dear! and to think that all the fondness for music in the world won't take me there."

When evening came, and the hour arrived when the carriage was to be at the door, there, lingering on the great staircase, was Fanchette Leroux, with her little basket on her arm; and she was just in time. When the carriage drove up, the footman let down the steps, and stood by the door waiting, and then another servant came out, and went backwards and forwards with some messages, and, lastly, laid down a piece of carpet, so that Mademoiselle Pauline's feet might not have to step on the stones of the pavement, which a shower had made damp. Then the *femme de chambre* came out from the apartments of Madame de la Tour, and in her hand carried the handkerchief, and fan, and smelling-bottle of Mademoiselle Pauline; and there was quite a bustle and rustling of silks, and the scent of sweet perfume reached even Fanchette, who stood at the turn of the stair; and at last Mademoiselle Pauline de la Tour, leaning on her mother's arm, came forth and walked slowly down the stairs. She was, as Fanchette had expected, very richly dressed; and to the little girl in the dark corner, the glossy satin, and delicate lace and feathers, and flowers, and gold, and pearls of the dresses of both mother and daughter, made quite a dazzle before her eyes. She had never seen any beautifully dressed ladies so near before, and it reminded her of the queens and princesses she had read of in story-books. Madame de la Tour was so stately and grand; and yet very grave—strangely grave, it seemed to Fanchette, for any one setting out for such a pleasure as the opera. And Mademoiselle Pauline! How pretty she was, too, after all! How lovely her complexion, and how rich and glossy her hair, and how graceful her slender figure; and yet she, too, was very grave, and had no smile on her lips; and she moved so slowly down the stairs, that it almost seemed as if

she were afraid of descending those steps, down and up which Fanchette was accustomed to trip so lightly; and her eyes were bent down—half closed as before—and she had no glance for any one; no smile or look of recognition for Fanchette as she passed her by; and then at the foot of the stairs, after she had gone down slowly, step by step, how carefully they all helped her into the carriage, and when seated in it, handed to her her bouquet and handkerchief, her fan, and her scent-bottle. Alas! poor Mademoiselle Pauline de la Tour! What had not Fanchette discovered about her, as she eagerly watched all her movements with clasped hands—the certainty of the sad fact gradually coming to her mind? With a pang of mingled surprise, and sorrow, and tender pity, Fanchette drew a deep breath, as she perceived, beyond any possibility of doubt, that Mademoiselle Pauline de la Tour was BLIND!

"And so," said she to her mother, after running up-stairs, and announcing to her, with breathless consternation, and eyes filled with tears, the discovery she had made—"and so, mamma, while I have been seeing all manner of beautiful things, poor mademoiselle is blind. She can see no flowers, or trees, or fountains, or the blue sky and the sunshine; she cannot even see her mother's face! Ah, mamma dear!" cried Fanchette, smiling at her mother and looking up into her face, "Don't you think, dear mamma, that when I say my prayers to-night I should thank the good God for giving me sight, and pray for poor Mademoiselle Pauline de la Tour?"

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

1. The town his pagan wife to Solomon brought.
2. What captain in the camp a king was made?
3. The place where Joseph his cruel brethren sought.
4. The third well dug where strife at last was stayed.
5. Whose son by Zebul's treachery was killed?
6. What simple word of life or death was test?
7. Whose son Joab's place against his master filled?
8. The judge in whose days Israel had no rest.
9. What town did Solomon build in the waste?
10. The place wherein two kings a navy built.
11. Whose household stuff within God's house was placed?
12. Who shrank aghast from his own future guilt?
13. What house in horses made much trade with Tyre?
14. What tribute-gatherer was by Israel stoned?
15. What prophet slew his enemies with fire?
16. The place where God the power of prayer owned?
17. The man Sennacherib to Israel sent?
18. Besides whose threshing-floor was God's plague stayed?
19. One to whom Ahaz altar-patterns sent.
20. What faithful nurse beneath an oak was laid?
The proud of heart shall surely fall,
The humble God will raise;
Our God resists the proud, and will
Surely confound their ways.

THE RAGGED-SCHOOL BOY.

A RHYME FOR YOUNG READERS.

AWAY from the smoky and dusty town,
And out for the sweet and elastic air;
To hill, to forest, to dell, to down,
Abroad in the fresh, and the free, and
the fair!

The long train glides on its ironed way,
With the merry freight of a ragged-school;
The clear skies promise a glorious day,
And each young breast is of gladness full.

The tickets they grasp in their veined, thin hands,
Are tickets for health, and sport, and joy;
And so they think, as in merry bands
Together they gambol, girl and boy.

They climb the trees, they paddle the streams,
They roam through forest, and field, and lane,
Till, all too early, the train up-steam
To hurry them back to town again.

But who is that crying? "My little lass,
Say, what's the matter that gives you pain?"
"I've lost my ticket—I cannot pass,
And oh, I shall never get back again!"

Then up spake a noble Ragged-school Boy—
"Here, take my ticket, I'll find the way!"
And then, not heeding her thanks and joy,
He started off in the evening grey.

And tramping along roads gravelled and gritty,
And trudging away through gloomy lanes,
By the midnight chimes he reached the city,
With aching ankles and throbbing veins.

One lesson thou dost to us impart,
Thou kingly boy, though in tatters drest:—
There may beat a noble and tender heart
Within a rude and ignoble breast.

THE FAMILY HONOUR.

BY MRS. C. L. BALFOUR, AUTHOR OF "THE WOMEN OF SCRIPTURE," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE MESSAGE.

"For duty is but deeds of loveliness,
And truth a power to make the spirit free;
And they whose self-forged bonds their souls repress,
No effort shall arouse from slavery."

FROM THE GERMAN.

THE last Sunday in September, some dozen years ago, was one of the very loveliest of autumn days, when the parting smile of summer lingered tenderly on the peaceful fields, and flushed the woodlands with a golden gleam, that promised to kindle rapidly into yet richer splendour; while there was a pure, fresh breath of coolness in the quiet air, most grateful after the heat of the harvest days. For Austwicke Chace was in the south of England, about sixty miles from London, towards the Hampshire coast, and the harvest for that year was over, well over, in that district. The afternoon sunbeams fell softly on the stubble fields, and along the slope of some rich meadows that skirted a narrow winding river, on whose opposite bank there was an extensive flat common, or chace as it was called, that was bounded in the distance by a stretch of noble woodland. The whole scene, in its quiet rural and sylvan beauty, being improved by a little village green and groups of nestling cottages at one end of the chace, and in the foreground of the other extremity were some scattered farmhouses and homesteads.

The church—Wicke Church, as, by the abbreviations of time, it was called—was close to the village green, and also close to the old house of the time-honoured lords of the manor—the Austwickses, an untitled but very ancient English family, whose boast, indeed, it was, that, once in olden times, and once again in more modern days, the honour of knighthood and of baronetage had been offered to, and declined by, their family.

It is just possible that pride, rather than humility, in both cases dictated that refusal of title and distinction; for, without going into records of the past history of the owners of Austwicke Chace, it is certain that Honoria Austwicke, a maiden lady of mature age, who now, for the time being, was the only occupant of the old mansion, had no lack of what she called "true dignity," and what others might consider overweening family pride, for personal and relative estimate is often very opposite in such matters. Certain it was that, among the congregation of the village church now streaming forth from its shadowy aisles and ivy-mantled porch into the sweet calm sunshine that bathed the fields in Sabbath quiet, none were more troubled by the sermon that had been preached to them that afternoon than the before-named lady.

The preacher was a young man, a curate only recently appointed; the incumbent of the living being an invalid, whose infirmities, of late years, had necessitated his residing at Harrogate. Mr. Nugent, the curate, was a

mild, reserved young man, rather liked by the farmers and people of Austwicke Chace, and by no means disliked by Miss Honor, as the lady of the Austwicke family was generally called, for she had ascertained from inquiries that Mr. Nugent, though poor, was "well connected," and she had concluded his principles were all that could be desired in a gentleman of good family and refined feelings. But the sermon of this afternoon was on humility, and instead of being soothing and suitable to her notions of the claims of station and the authority of rank, was against pride—especially family pride.

She marched through the private wicket gate out of the churchyard into the grounds of Chace Hall with a step so firm, and a mien so erect, that it might be called defiant. Turning for a moment to look back towards the church, she saw Mr. Nugent coming towards her, and answered his bow by a curtsy at once so stately and so distant that it forbade any further approach; indeed, she at the same time locked the wicket gate with her own pass-key, and went on by a path through the shrubbery, feeling, it must be owned, no pleasure in the tranquillity of Nature, no soothing in its beauty.

Just then the soft blue sky, the slanting beams of the westering sun, that sent broad shafts of gold through the interlacing boughs of the shrubbery, was all unnoticed by her. A sense of offended dignity shut out all other sensations but that of haughty anger. As she came to the wide lawn that spread before the old hall, she stood still an instant and looked at it intently. It was a heterogeneous mass of building, with no pretensions to architectural merit: a long, irregular-gabled front, with incongruous but convenient modern windows to the lower rooms; an ivy-covered turret at the far or west end, under which was the principal entrance, long unused, and now completely overgrown by a luxuriant Virginia creeper that, in its autumnal garb of brilliant crimson, hung flaunting over the dark green ivy like trailing blood-red banners. At the end of the building next to Miss Honor was the east porch, an old oaken doorway that led into the east wing, the only part of the house at present occupied. A belt of thick plantation and shrubs completely encircled the wide lawn—or, as Miss Honor called it, "the croft;" but through some spaces skilfully left in the woodland there were peeps of the Chace beyond, the shining little river that girdled it, and the upland fields and farms stretching away in the distance.

"It is a place to love, ay, and to be proud of," said the lady, as she scanned the house rather than the surroundings; adding, after a moment's pause, as she heaved a troubled sigh, "and yet they do not value it—not as they should, not as I, in their place, would. Why did not my brother Edmund stay here, and improve the property and keep up the family influence? He might have been alive now, and have prevented—ay, prevented—as became his name, the growth of such opinions as I have heard this afternoon. 'Blessed are the meek!' Of course, that is Holy Scripture, and true; but it surely means teach the poor to be humble; but as to talking about pride so pointedly, as if to me, it's sheer nonsense, or worse."

She untied the strings of her bonnet as she talked to herself, and in an absent way took it off and hung it on her arm, pacing to and fro on the thick mossy turf before the house. In her way she was quite as remarkable looking as the old hall itself. Her features were well cut and fine, but must have been always rather too strongly marked for female beauty. Now that she was something past her fortieth year, her high nose, lofty but narrow forehead, arched brows that nearly met, tremulous, irresolute mouth, and perfectly pale complexion, gave her a distinguished and anxious, yet somewhat forbidding, or perhaps unapproachable look. And yet there was kindness enough in her clear, dark-grey, restless eyes to compensate for the frigid hauteur of the face. But she had a languid way of drooping her eyelids that prevented most observers from noticing their usual benevolent expression. If, indeed, such an observer had chanced to see her angry, then the flash and gleam that made her eyes glow like two wells of quivering light, would not soon be forgotten. For the rest, her person was spare and of middle height, though the erect way in which she carried her head made her appear much taller than she really was. Her dress of steel-grey silk, trimmed with black lace, suited her face and form, and in particular harmonised with her partially faded hair, which, yet thick and abundant, was pinned up on each side of her head in the stiff curls that had been in fashion in her early womanhood.

She was still musing, when the Sabbath silence of the day was broken by the sound of a horse's hoofs galloping along the hard chalk road at the rear of the hall. There was such unmistakable speed in the sound, that Miss Honor Austwicke, with a startled pause, turned her head to listen if the horseman were merely passing or coming to the hall. The loud clangour of the bell at the stable entrance announced some messenger, whose tidings were of sufficient import to warrant his making the whole household hear. With her steps a little quickened, the lady walked at once towards the house, and without waiting to go into the east porch, turned the fastening of a side window that led into a little drawing-room overlooking a small flower garden. It was her own special part of the house, where, if she were wanted, the servants would immediately seek her. Whether it was part of Miss Honor's creed not to allow herself to manifest curiosity or surprise, the fact is certain that she sat herself quietly down in her usual chair, and, taking up a book from the table, began reading just as an old man servant, with a head as white as the silver salver he held in his hand, approached her with a letter; and, presenting it to her, lingered a moment after she took it, with an anxious look on his face.

The letter, though addressed to Miss Austwicke, was evidently in a handwriting unknown to that lady, for she turned it about in her hands a moment or two inquiringly before opening it, then, leisurely unfastening the envelope, the printed words, "Royal Sturgeon Hotel, Southampton," met her gaze, and the light began to leap out of her eyes as she read the words—

MADAM,—A gentleman, whose card is enclosed, lies dangerously ill at this house. In answer to inquiries made of him about his

friends, he requested that you might be written to, to come to him without delay.—I am, madam, your obedient servant,

RALPH HOBBS,
Landlord.

P.S. Dr. Bissle considers the case very serious.

In opening the letter the card enclosed had dropped to the ground. The old servant, more alertly than might have been expected, stooped to pick it up, eyeing it all the more eagerly that his eyes, unaided by glasses, could not read it. His mistress took it from him, and laying her disengaged hand on her side, as if to still a throb that shook her, read aloud, with forced calmness, the name, "Captain Wilfred Austwicke;" adding, as if unconsciously, "My brother—my brother Wilfred in England! ill, at Southampton!"

"Master Wilfred come home from India, and no word sent!" burst involuntarily from the old serving man, who immediately apologised—"I ask your pardon, Miss Honor—madam—I humbly ask your pardon. I'm getting a bit old, and I didn't expect to see Master Wilfred no more."

Miss Honor bent her head condescendingly to the aged butler. Her pale face was a shade paler for the tidings that had come thus suddenly, and there was a tremor in her voice as she said—

"Yes, Gubbins, you are old enough to know that 'Master Wilfred' is now a foolish expression as applied to my brother, Captain Austwicke, and also you must remember that he is very sudden in his decisions. However, his illness is the chief thing. Who brought this letter?"

"A man o' horseback, Miss Honor. He hev rid post haste from the 'Royal Sturgeon,' Southampton—a full twenty mile. I make bold, I know, a speaking on 'em, but it seems but yesterday all three on 'em was boys here. And now one on 'em has gone, and the two that's left is getting to be middle-aged men—gentlemen, I mean."

"Send Martin to me, and order the carriage; I shall go at once to Southampton, Gubbins," interposed Miss Honor, waving her hand in dismissal of the old man, who, bowing as he left, yet kept muttering to himself along the passage to the offices, "All boys, like as twere yesterday, the three, and now on'y two left, and one ill—like to die, maybe—at Southampton. Come home all of a heat, jest like his old ways. Oh, he jest was a bright 'un; and for quickness, such a highflyer he was! Here, Martin, go to your mistress; she wants you to pack up quick. Do you hear, all of you? Jem and Bob, where are you?" Calling and coughing at intervals, the old man bustled away towards the stables, giving orders, and recalling, meanwhile, recollections which evidently showed that "Master Wilfred," as he called him, was the favourite of the three sons of the household in the old servant's estimation.

The bustle of the domestics that soon filled the usually orderly dwelling, contrasted with the enforced calmness that was maintained by the lady up-stairs in making her preparations.

Her waiting-woman, Martin, brought up a cup of strong tea, and implored her mistress to take it, alleging, with truth, that as Miss Honor had not dined, she would be faint for want before reaching her destination. The lady yielded to her servant's entreaties, feeling in reality, notwithstanding her apparent calmness, too

anxious and surprised by this sudden summons to the bed-side of a brother who, half an hour ago, she had thought was in India, to take any precautions for her own comfort. As, however, she concluded that the removal of the invalid from his present quarters would be possible, perhaps, without further delay, she did not fail to remind Martin, who was to accompany her mistress, to take plenty of such cloaks and wraps for the use of the sick man as Indian luggage would not be likely to contain; and in less than an hour from the time of the arrival of the message, Miss Honoria Austwicke and her maid were seated in the large, old-fashioned travelling carriage, and journeying on, behind two heavy grey coach horses, at a pace that, however respectable on that cross country route, was certainly far more dignified than swift. It is true that, by a seven miles' drive to a railway station, the lady could have gone the remaining fifteen or sixteen miles in half an hour; but she preferred going as her family had done, before the fiery horse was harnessed to the iron car; and therefore it was quite ten o'clock at night when the Austwicke carriage and its smoking steeds rattled under the bar of the High Street, and reached the portico of the "Royal Sturgeon Hotel," Southampton.

A knot of people were waiting about the hall, and at a little corner eyelet window on the staircase, used, no doubt, for observation, there was a white square face, fixed in a stony stare at Miss Austwicke, as, assisted by her servants, she alighted.

CHAPTER II.

A PROMISE.

"The very tones in which we spake
Had something strange, I could but mark;
The leaves of memory seemed to make
A mournful rustling in the dark." LONGFELLOW.

As Miss Austwicke was shown up-stairs to a drawing-room on the first-floor of the hotel, and her maid was assisting her to take off her shawl and bonnet, there was a tap at the door, and a little bald-headed, glossy gentleman came into the room with a brisk but very quiet step, and making a low bow, in a formal, serious manner somewhat at variance with his bright quick eyes and shining face, said, "I have the honour, I believe, of speaking to Miss Austwicke, of the Chace?"

The lady bowed in assent.

"Ah, yes—just so; and I regret to say our invalid—Captain Austwicke, I think, is it not?—is in a very unsatisfactory state—very unsatisfactory."

"Can I see him, sir—Dr. Bissle, I believe?"

"Yes, madam; Bissle—yes, assuredly, my dear madam—assuredly, you can see him. The fact is, Captain Austwicke is not, I regret to say, as amenable to medical authority as I could wish. Cerebral excitement—nervous irritation. But better, far better, than when I was called in on his arrival here yesterday."

"Indeed! then he came yesterday?"

"Landed—or, I should say, brought on shore, from Sir Gwihen Pentreal's yacht—a wonderful fast sailer—in which, it seems, he made the voyage from Falmouth, where an accident of some kind to her gear has detained for a few days, the—dear me! I forget her name—the

East Indiaman that he came home in. Sir Gwithen it was who sent for me to attend Captain Austwicke, but could not himself stay, for he was bound to Cherbourg or the Channel Islands, to fetch Lady Pentreal."

"And my brother, then, is ill?" said Miss Austwicke, in order to bring the rather pompous and prosy doctor to the subject that was more important to her than the mere narrative of how her brother had come home.

"Unhappily—yes. A fit, it seems, had prostrated him before he was landed. He was making an attempt, a most injudicious attempt, to travel farther—to Austwicke Chace—or, I rather think, some much more distant place than that, by what he said—and notwithstanding my dissuasions, when another and worse attack prostrated him: He was unconscious during the night and part of this morning. I was not absolutely certain that he was of our Hampshire Austwicks, or I might, on my own responsibility, have sent to you, madam. But this afternoon he attempted to write—a very undesirable thing in his state—and, as it proved, beyond his strength; but I understand he ordered you to be sent for, and, I must add, declined—but that is, no doubt, part of the malady he suffers from—declined to consult me further, or to take his medicines: a very common symptom in some cases."

"I make no doubt, sir, your attention to my brother lays his family under great obligation," said Miss Austwicke, in her loftiest manner; "but I feel every moment an age until I see him."

The landlady, Mrs. Hobbins, at this juncture entered the room, saying, "If you please, ma'am, the gentleman is calling for you."

Miss Austwicke, who had been standing while the doctor spoke, immediately followed Mrs. Hobbins, Martin preparing to accompany her; but the lady said decidedly, "I will see my brother alone." And after crossing a lobby, pausing for a moment in the doorway of a large chamber, dimly lighted by a single candle, she looked within searchingly, and then entered, shutting the door with all womanly tact, so as to make no noise, and, with quiet footsteps, walked across the chamber to the bed-side. The gloom was so great she could only see the dim outline of the dark face that rested on the pillow. A laboured, ominous breathing fell distinctly on her ear, and told her more than her eye could of the invalid's desperate state. She stood motionless for some minutes at his bed-side, unable to speak a word; and as her eyes became accustomed to the subdued light, could discern that restless hands, wasted to the bone, were twitching at the coverlet on which they lay; and that the sunk, yet regular features, whose form she recognised with amazement that so much could change, and yet identity remain, were working nervously in what seemed mental as well as bodily agony. The invalid was the first to speak:—

"Will she never come? They said she was here."

"I am here, Wilfred; I am here, brother—dear brother."

She bent over the bed, and took one of his hands as she faltered out, hesitatingly, the last part of the sentence.

"Dear brother!" said the sick man, repeating her

words in a moaning tone, and turning on his pillow in the direction of her voice—"dear brother! I don't know, Honor, that I have been dear to you; or that any one of us but Edmund ever was dear to you; and he was the heir of Austwicke. There never was much love among us—never enough, I now think, Honor."

He paused, and reaching out his wasted and burning hands, and gripping hers, which had tightly clasped his fingers, he added, "Yet I am glad you have come, if a miserable and dying man can be glad at anything."

"No, no, Wilfred, neither miserable nor dying," she interposed. As she spoke, his hold on her hand tightened until it was so painful that the tears sprang to her eyes.

"Dying, I say—and miserable. No need of many words. There"—releasing her hand suddenly, as if just conscious that he might be hurting her—"there, sit down; give me that drink," pointing to a glass on a little marble table near the bed.

Miss Austwicke looked a moment at the goblet containing a liquid, whose pungent odour revealed the presence of some strong stimulant; and said as she gave it—"Did Dr. Bissle prescribe this?"

"I want none of Dr. Bissle's prescriptions. Doctors, indeed! I'm past their tinkering."

"Brother, do be —"

"There, Honor—don't worry me or yourself"—drinking, and drawing a gasping breath after it. "There that'll give me a fillip. I—I—want to tell you—something—something of importance, that must be told, Honor."

"Not now, Wilfred; you will fatigue yourself. To-morrow will do, or when you get home—not now."

"To-morrow—home! You don't know the meaning of those words to me. Raise me up, sister—raise me up, and hear me, I say, if I can manage to speak. It must and shall be told."

She did as he requested, and piled up the pillows so as to raise his head nearly on a level with her own face. As she drew a chair and sat down, a feeble ray of the candle fell across her shoulder on to the face of her brother. The curtains along the other side and the foot of the bed were drawn, and thus closed in to the smallest space the scene that the gleam of light revealed. It was vain for Miss Austwicke to delude herself with hope, as she now scrutinised her brother's features. There was the unmistakable moulding of the hand of death in the face, brow, and pinched nose and mouth. She was so suddenly impressed with this, that she had some difficulty to control her impulse to call for help. But something in the eager gaze of the glassy eyes held her mute and spell-bound.

"Get my pocket-book; it's under my pillow. Open it. There's a letter—not that: no, a sealed letter—yes, that's it. Lay it down a moment."

Following his directions, she had taken from among some loose papers and memoranda in his pocket-book a worn and soiled blank envelope, sealed with the Austwicke crest, and the initials "W. A." underneath it. She laid this within his reach on the bedclothes, silently resumed her seat, and awaited his communication.

(To be continued.)